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ABSTRACT

This learning module, which is part of a management and supervisor training program for managers and supervisors employed at the Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Division (WID), is designed to prepare trainees to guide the career development of employees at their plant. The following topics are covered in the module's individual sections: guiding employee development (developing new/inexperienced employees, understanding the role of training in career development, identifying talent, and assessing employees and estimating their promotability); coaching for optimal performance; mentoring; career counseling (using good counseling practices and managing expectations); counseling employees regarding the WID's progression groups; making promotion decisions (exempt and nonexempt promotions, promotion from nonexempt to exempt status, and the Peter principle); and understanding/using WID's job posting system. Each section includes some or all of the following: enabling objectives, an exercise requiring trainees to evaluate a manager's effectiveness in a given scenario, and lists of good practices and practices to avoid. Concluding the module are a list of "smart moves," 30-item reference list, practice test, and test answers. (MN)

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ED 395 157

Waste Isolation Division (WID)
Management and Supervisor Training (MAST) Program

PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

MAS-111

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A. INTRODUCTION

Terminal Objective

Upon completion of this module, the trainee will be able to effectively guide the career development of employees.

Mastery of the terminal objective will be demonstrated by scoring 80 percent or higher on the module examination.

Because organizations (and managers) are only as good as their employees, personnel development is a requirement for long-term success. That is why Westinghouse has pledged to "...provide employees every possible opportunity for self-improvement and advancement in the Company." WID derives a number of benefits from upholding this pledge, because personnel development:

- Enables WID to "grow" effective employees

  Employees can be hired into entry-level positions and then promoted into higher positions as their job knowledge and abilities expand. Employees benefit because they can advance within the division. WID benefits because the degree of success experienced by the division is directly related to the competence and performance of its work force.

- Assists in meeting equal employment opportunity and affirmative action objectives

  Personnel development helps to prepare minorities, women, and other employees for higher positions.

- Reduces turnover and personnel costs

  Research indicates that organizations that make concerted efforts to help employees plan their careers experience lower turnover and personnel costs.

- Prevents career drift

  The lack of proper attention to personnel development can lead to "career drift." This is when employees drift along with no goals or plans for self-development, while the job and environment continue to impose change and demand innovation. Personnel development helps to eliminate career drift.

This module will provide you with information you need to effectively guide the career development of employees. Here is an overview of what's covered in this module:

- Section B, "Guiding Employee Development," contains a model for developing new, inexperienced employees and defines the role of training in employee development. This section includes a discussion of systems for inventorying talent and identifying job candidates.

- Section C, "Coaching for Optimal Performance," provides tips you can use to effectively coach and provide feedback to employees.

- Section D, "Mentoring," describes the benefits of mentoring and the characteristics of effective mentors. Guidelines for selecting employees to be mentored are presented and how to mentor employees is explained.

- Section E, "Career Counselling," explains how to conduct career counselling discussions effectively. This section also includes techniques you can use to manage employee expectations and ensure that employees have realistic career aspirations.

- Section F, "Progression Groups," explains how progression groups are used at WID.

- Section G, "Making Promotion Decisions," explains how employees are promoted at WID and includes valuable information that can help you make good promotion decisions.

- Section H, "The Job Posting System," explains how WID's job posting system works.

B. GUIDING EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good employee development practices.
2. Identify employee development practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in guiding employee development.

"Employee development" is the process whereby employees take responsibility for expanding their work-related knowledge, skills, and abilities. This section provides you with information you can use to skillfully guide your employees' development.

You may have noticed that "staff development" is one of the job elements listed on management Performance Management System (PMS) forms. This is because development is one of the 12 Conditions of Excellence and a key element of total quality. WID managers are accountable for their performance in this important management responsibility. Your role as a manager or supervisor is to help employees establish developmental objectives and identify steps they can take to reach these objectives. In effect, you help employees identify pathways that lead toward their career goals. The rest is up to the employees.

The rate of development varies from employee to employee. This was verified by John Kotter, Victor Faux, and Charles McArthur, who studied the careers of many individuals:

> We have seen many former students who seem to learn more in their first five years of work than others learn in 15 years or more. The fast-learning group appear to be different from others in that they proactively take responsibility for their own learning. They seek out role models and mentors, recognizing that one relationship with a highly talented and successful senior person can be enormously instructive. They don't stay in one job for more than a few years, taking advantage of the fact that almost all the learning associated with most jobs comes in the first two years. They don't wait to be assigned to new projects and jobs by others; they nominate themselves. In this and other ways they actively manage their careers.

WID provides resources and information that influence employees' career decisions. A variety of resources exist at WID to help employees set career goals, increase their education, and strengthen technical skills. These are discussed later in this section. Employees, however, are ultimately responsible for their own development. This is because employees control critical variables such as whether to remain with Westinghouse, to seek or accept specific positions, and to strive for high performance and personal growth on the job.

Developing New, Inexperienced Employees

Have you noticed that the experiences of people who have successful early careers often fit a pattern? This pattern usually unfolds something like this:

- The new, inexperienced employee adjusts quickly to the unwritten rules of the organization. As a result of a good hiring decision, the employee is a proper fit for the job and the organization. On-the-job stress experienced by the employee is not excessive.

- The employee is given some challenging initial assignments. Because of the good employee/job/organization match, the employee performs well on the assignments.

- These early successes build the employee's self-confidence and lead to increasingly challenging, important, and visible assignments.

- The employee's competence grows, helping him or her to do well in these next assignments.

- Successful job performance builds the employee's self-confidence and provides access to people and other resources needed for further development. More important assignments continue to be given to the employee.

- This pattern of success continues throughout the employee's early career.

The outcome of this pattern is a successful, self-confident, valuable employee. Isn't this the type of employee you want working for you? Use this pattern as a model when planning the development of new, inexperienced employees.

The Role of Training in Employee Development

It is a commonly held belief that employee development can best be accomplished through formal training courses. Training, however, is just one piece of the development puzzle. Michael Gast, a training consultant, asserts that:

> Training, by itself, exposes our working colleagues to new ideas, period. We can expect training to do more than that if we weave it into a carefully constructed web: prework that gives people reasons to attend and to care; links that tie the training to real problems that occur on the job; follow-up activities that assure the new skills will be applied and that people will get feedback and rewards when they do apply them.

When you use training as a development tool, don't let employees slip back into the same old rut. You can maximize the value of training by encouraging and rewarding employees for applying what was learned to their jobs.

Don't overemphasize training in the development of employees. Informal attention from you makes the real difference in your employees' development. Remember: training is a tool at your disposal, but it should be used with good judgement.

Assistance in making optimal use of your training budget is available from the Manager, Human Resources Development and Total Quality (HRD&TQ). Additional information on the proper use of training can be found in MAS-129, *Training and Qualification of Personnel*.

Developmental Experiences, Activities, and Assignments

Challenging Job Assignments

Challenging job assignments are among the best employee development experiences. Assignments referred to as "challenging" require employees to cope with stress, make decisions quickly, work under heavy deadline pressure, or deal with difficult people. Such assignments speed the development of employees and provide opportunities to exercise crucial leadership skills.

Don't rule out giving challenging job assignments to new, inexperienced employees. Early challenges build competence quickly and have long-lasting positive effects on employees' careers. Discretion must be exercised, however, to avoid giving new, inexperienced employees assignments that will overwhelm them. Start with assignments that will challenge employees but not place the division at risk.

More Experienced Coworkers

Another way that employees develop is through the assistance of more seasoned co-workers. More experienced coworkers that serve as teachers, coaches, or mentors are a big source of our development. In some cases, development happens as we learn from others who serve as bad examples, showing what not to do in an organizational setting.

Job Rotation

Job rotation is the planned rotation of employees through a series of jobs and/or functions to provide them with beneficial experiences. Job rotation is critically important to the development of talent. Why? Because job rotation gives employees an overall perspective of the organization and an understanding of the interrelationships among its various sections and departments. It also provides an opportunity to perform different tasks and learn from a variety of people - a springboard for success. Job rotation also helps to prevent employees from becoming stale or "burned out" from staying in one position too long.

Lateral Moves

Lateral moves are another career development option that should not be overlooked. A "lateral" is a move across locations, functions, or divisions at the same job code. Lateral moves give employees a chance to broaden their experience base, which is usually a very valuable career experience.

Other assignments and activities that can help employees grow include the following:

- Job experiences

  There are a wealth of job experiences that can help employees grow and develop. These include:

  - Functioning as a team leader
  - Administering a subcontract
  - Serving as a department total quality coordinator
  - Functioning as a department/section goal lead
  - Participating on a task force
  - Planning an off-site meeting or conference
  - Handling an important interaction with a customer
  - Presenting a proposal to senior management
  - Making speeches or presentations
  - Working on a project with personnel from another section/department
  - Managing a site visit
  - Designing simpler, more effective processes
  - Writing a policy
  - Conducting a root cause analysis
  - Preparing a critical incident for a MAST or SUPRO module
  - Conducting informal training

- Technical training programs

  Don't overlook the many courses offered by WID Technical Training. Employees can gain useful knowledge by:

  - Completing courses related to their job
  - Completing courses indirectly related to their job (cross-training)

    Cross-training helps employees gain a better understanding of WIPP operations outside their present focus.

- Professional development

  Employees need to make time for professional development to stay abreast of advances within their chosen career field. Activities which can help in this regard include:

  - Participating in the SUPRO program
  - Participating in the MAST program
  - Completing WID office professional courses
  - Joining a job-related professional organization
  - Attending offsite seminars

- Education

  Employees who are well-educated tend to be more confident and use a greater variety of problem-solving strategies. Employees can improve their education by:

  - Making use of the Educational Assistance Program
  - Participating in Waste Management Education and Research Consortium seminars and degree programs

- Self-study

  Self-study is a convenient way for employees to learn. Make sure that your employees are aware that they can learn at their convenience by:

  - Viewing videotapes and listening to audiotapes maintained in HRD&TQ
  - Completing TPC courses maintained in Technical Training
  - Reading job-related books

    These can be found in the WIPP Technical Library and in HRD&TQ. Other job-related books belonging to the DOE/WIPP are dispersed throughout WIPP facilities. If you or one of your employees is seeking a book on a particular topic, ask around. This can prevent the necessity of purchasing the book you need.

- Exposure to business unit issues

  Exposing employees to business unit activities helps them to understand "the big picture." This also provides employees with an opportunity to learn about potentially useful practices used elsewhere within the Government Operations Business Unit (GOBU). Employees can learn about the GOBU by:

  - Attending GOBU presentations and meetings
  - Participating in GOBU committees

- Networking

  "Networking" is the development of contacts or exchange of information with others in an informal network. Your employees can obtain useful information through networking. Encourage your employees to engage in productive networking with their counterparts at other government-owned contractor-operated (GOCO) facilities.

- Off-the-job experiences

  Contributing one's talents to the community can yield personal growth and positively affect one's work capabilities. Off-the-job experiences include activities such as:

  - Teaching a college or university course
  - Assisting a scout troop
  - Working with the United Way

Participation in one of the above activities or assignments does not guarantee that the experience will be developmental. It won't be if new tasks are consistently approached the same way as previous tasks, using old approaches and behaviors. Significant employee development requires that employees move out of their comfort zones and begin to stretch themselves.

Identifying Talent

Systems for inventorying talent and identifying job candidates are needed to:

- Ensure that an adequate, prepared supply of talent exists to meet projected needs
- Improve staffing decisions

- Expand the career progression possibilities for highly talented employees
- Identify persons who can be successful contributors over the long term in their careers

Within Westinghouse, talent is inventoried and job candidates are identified through the use of:

- Assessment centers
- Estimates of promotability
- Personnel history records
- Career Interest Forms

Let's briefly discuss each of these.

Assessment Centers

An assessment center is a formal process in which participants take part in written and oral exercises. These exercises simulate conditions and situations which would be encountered on the job. As participants perform the exercises their behavior is observed, recorded, and compared to a standard by trained observers (assessors). Assessors then rate each participant's performance on each exercise. This process accurately and validly identifies participants' behavioral and situational strengths and areas for development. Assessment centers are a good way to determine a person's suitability for a position.

WID uses an assessment center to assist in identifying employees with potential for supervisory or managerial positions. The information the process provides is an important aid in selecting the right persons for supervisory/managerial positions.

WID's assessment process helps to diagnose individual development needs. Employees gain self-insight by completing the assessment exercises. Even high potential candidates will have some minor weaknesses which will, if not corrected, create problems when and if they are promoted. The process identifies these problem areas. Employees who do poorly in the process can reassess their career direction, possibly determining that supervision/management is not right for them.

A dimension is a descriptive label that can be defined in terms of behavior, and under which job related knowledge, skills, and abilities can be logically and readily classified. Dimensions measured during WID's assessment process include the following:

- Oral communication skill
- Planning and organizing
- Problem analysis
- Initiative
- Leadership
- Decisiveness
- Judgement
- Management control
- Stress tolerance
- Sensitivity
- Management identification
- Flexibility
- Written communication skill

As you can see, the assessment process permits the evaluation of employees in terms of many dimensions--13 to be exact. The process gives a very thorough picture of an employee's suitability to be a supervisor or manager.

Assessments are coordinated by the Human Resources Department. Use the assessment center as a tool to help you make wise promotion decisions. Do you have any employees who are likely to be considered for a supervisory/managerial role within the next 12 months? If so, you should consider sending them through the assessment process. Contact Human Resources to find out when the next assessment center will be held; they may add your employees' names to the waiting list for the next assessment.

Estimates of Promotability

Estimates of promotability are prepared annually for senior managers and biennially for other exempt personnel. These forms provide an organized approach for estimating someone's promotability and summarizing this estimate to provide useful information. They are used frequently both within WID and by personnel in other Westinghouse divisions in making staffing decisions.

The immediate manager of the individual whose promotability is being estimated completes the form. Instructions that should be followed when filling out the form are available from Human Resources. Be truthful, constructive, and specific when completing estimates of promotability. If you are a recently promoted manager, you may need to consult with your predecessor to prepare a valid estimate.

Employees should never be shown estimates of promotability. Why not? Because estimates of promotability are just that--*estimates*. If your estimate is lower than the employee's self-estimate, the employee is likely to be demoralized. If your estimate is high, the employee may develop unrealistic expectations. Furthermore, estimates change over time. Thus, there is no purpose served by sharing estimates of promotability with employees.

Personal History Records

Personal history records serve as internal corporate resumes, providing information about employees to persons throughout Westinghouse. Exempt and management employees should update their personal history records every two years.

Career Interest Forms

Career interest forms help to clarify in which directions employees want to head with their career. Completing career interest forms is optional, but encourage your employees to do so. Information provided on these forms can help you hold effective career discussions with employees.

It is important to keep personal history records, estimates of promotability, and career interest forms up-to-date. Within Westinghouse, these documents are used to gather information about employees. WID employees have received promotions because these documents were accessed by other Westinghouse organizations.

A Final Word on the Value of Developing Your Employees

What do you as a supervisor or manager get in return for all this effort expended guiding employee development? Your efforts benefit you, the employee, and WID. Your employees will be more committed, loyal, and motivated to help you. Employees feel more committed to an organization when they know they have a future within that organization.

Good Employee Development Practices

- Lessen the trauma experienced by newly hired employees by effectively orienting them

  Orientation is the process of introducing new employees to their work setting. You can assist in orienting new WID employees by:

  - Ensuring that they complete NEO-100, *New Employee Orientation*
  - Asking a co-worker to familiarize the new employee with the office
  - Making sure that the new employee does not have to eat lunch alone during his or her first week
  - Meeting with the new employee daily
  - Explaining the employee's responsibilities and limits of authority
  - Ensuring that the employee attends required training
  - Establishing goals for the employee

- Provide employees with specific performance feedback

  Hold performance discussions frequently; they're too important to be a once-a-year event. Conduct regular one-on-one meetings and help employees improve their performance. Take the time required to coach and mentor employees. Stay accessible to employees. And make sure you give consistent feedback. Don't tell employees they are doing a good job during the course of the year and then "zing" them on their performance reviews. Inconsistent feedback has a negative effect on employee performance and boss/employee relations.

- Take an active role in your employees' training

  Employees may not complete all courses they need unless you ensure that they do.

- Conduct sincere, unambiguous performance appraisals

  Be candid and specific, offering clear feedback to employees concerning past actions. Give employees information they need to improve. And don't forget to conduct the quarterly objective reviews required by the Performance Management System.

- Delegate developmental tasks

  Think about where your time at work goes. Are there tasks that you perform which might be good learning assignments for your employees? Delegating such tasks can develop your employees while freeing you to concentrate on other things such as planning, self-development, and managing by walking around.

- Maximize the retention and transfer of what is learned in training courses

  Ask employees how they are applying what they learned in training courses. Recognize employees who apply newly learned behaviors and ideas.

Practices to Avoid

- Regarding training as the mainstay of employee development

  Employees learn only a portion of the knowledge and skills required to succeed from training courses. The rest is learned from experience and other people. Share your success secrets with employees; don't force them to learn the hard way.

- Failing to discuss with employees what was learned at training courses and how it can be applied on the job

  This will send the signal that training and development are not important.

- Assuming that employees always want to be where they are

  Employees may want to broaden their work horizons. You'll never know unless you ask them about their career aspirations.

- Including inappropriate statements on performance appraisal or PMS forms

  An example of an inappropriate statement is: "Ms. Smith is operating way beyond her job scope; she should be promoted to grade 26 as soon as possible." After reading such a statement, Ms. Smith will feel wronged if for some reason the promotion to grade 26 does not happen.

- Giving employees inappropriate levels of responsibility or authority

  Some ambitious employees are always seeking greater challenges. This otherwise admirable trait can lead to problems if you allow employees to perform 1) duties that are fundamentally yours (hiring, salary planning, appraising the performance of your direct reports) or 2) work for which they are not trained, qualified, or certified. More information about what to delegate can be found in MAS-104, *Responsibility and Authority*.

- Neglecting the development of technical employees

  Don't assume that technical employees want to stay within a narrow range of specialization. Many technical employees appreciate opportunities to develop new knowledge, skills, or abilities. Help them develop non-technical skills and learn new technical disciplines through cross-training.

- Allowing employees to lose their work focus

  Ultimately, WID exists to manage and operate the WIPP for the DOE and to earn profit for Westinghouse. We can't accomplish this if employees don't concentrate on job performance. Personnel development is important, but it should not be allowed to undermine employees' work contributions.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: An employee was failing in his position. The employee's manager sent the employee to HRD&TQ. A HRD&TQ representative asked the employee what his needs were. The employee replied, "I don't know; my manager just said I need training."

Impact: 1) HRD&TQ was not provided with enough information with which to assist the employee. 2) The employee was demoralized and was unsure what to do to improve his performance.

Lessons learned: 1) Employees who are performing ineffectively need specific feedback and coaching from their boss. 2) Identify an employee's specific needs before seeking training; don't use a "paintbrush" approach.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A WID manager skillfully guides the development of her employees by:

- Giving new employees moderately challenging assignments to build their competence and self-confidence

  When employees prove that their skills have advanced and that they are ready to grow, the manager gives them more challenging assignments.

- Finding out what technical areas employees are interested in and involves them in these areas

- Using the PMS system effectively, ensuring that employees are highly involved in the objective-setting process

- Seeing that each of her employees choose and complete at least one job-related training course each year

  Employees who have shown that they use a high percentage of what they learn in training are sent to more courses.

- Nominating employees for division and corporate awards when they make significant contributions

- Holding coaching sessions with her employees

  For example, she has coached non-assertive employees on when it is appropriate to say "no" to co-workers.

- Allotting the time necessary to act as a technical sounding board for employees

  This may require the manager to spend several hours per day with a junior employee who is wrestling with an assignment.

- Holding monthly one-on-one talks with new, inexperienced employees during which she discusses topics such as procedural philosophy, integrity, the inner workings of Westinghouse, enhancing performance in audits, and other valuable things she has learned from experience

- Encouraging employees and giving them time to submit patent disclosures and submit technical papers for publication

- Utilizing the experience of senior employees by making them technical lead persons and mentors for new, inexperienced employees

- Scheduling interactive sessions where experienced employees take the lead to share and explain technical information and techniques

- Building the company loyalty of her high-potential employees by discussing the breadth of opportunities available at Westinghouse

- Ensuring that high-potential employees receive appropriate pay raises and promotions

Impacts: 1) This manager has a reputation for competence. 2) Her employees consistently say that she is a "good boss." 3) There is almost no turnover in this manager's section.

Lessons learned: 1) Personnel development isn't an abstract art; it simply requires caring, time, and common sense. 2) Managers who are skilled at developing employees are perceived as good people for whom to work.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A manager completed the performance appraisal form for one of his non-exempt employees. When completing Section 3, "Developmental Improvement Plans," the manager wrote, "Discussions have taken place with WID HR for a possible upgrade to a higher job code next quarter."

Impact: The full impact is not yet known, because this is a very recent incident. It appears that promoting the employee to a higher job grade is unlikely because there are many employees in the same job classification with more seniority. If the higher job grade does not materialize, the employee will be disappointed.

Lesson learned: Developmental plans are outlines of what employees can do to improve their performance and build greater expertise. Developmental plans should not include speculative statements about promotions, raises, or other organizational rewards which may or may not actually occur.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: An up-and-coming employee reported to a manager who rarely discussed developmental plans with his employees. The manager believed the employee had a significant career pathway within the department, but the employee was unaware of this. As a result of this lack of attention from the manager, the employee felt he had reached a plateau within the department.

Impact: The employee applied for and received a position in another department. The manager lost a key employee.

Lessons learned: 1) Employees cannot read your mind. Lack of communication can cause a highly regarded employee to assume they are at a career dead-end. 2) Your ambitious employees are the first ones you'll lose if you don't spend time developing, coaching, and communicating with them.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: An employee was among the top performers in a manager's section. The manager changed the employee's duties, making the employee a "right-hand man." The employee no longer was expected to meet the same standards as other employees. The manager concentrated his attention on this top performing employee.

Impact: Some of the other employees in the section felt underappreciated. They resented the top performer, who they regarded as the manager's "pet." The manager's credibility with his employees was diminished.

Lesson learned: Supervisors and managers must walk a fine line when developing employees. High-potential employees and those who yearn to make greater contributions may require more of your time and attention. One must be careful, however, not to concentrate attention on a few employees while ignoring the rest. Assist all employees to enlarge their job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities.

C. COACHING FOR OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good coaching practices.
2. Identify coaching practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in coaching for optimal performance.

Coaching is the process of guiding subordinates toward effective job performance. Coaching requires that you set a good example and explain why things are done the way they are.

Through coaching, you can:

- Work together with your employees to improve their performance
- Improve communication and collaboration between you and your employees
- Assist employees in accomplishing career goals
- Improve the overall performance of your section/department

An integral part of coaching is providing feedback. Feedback is essential for both learning and motivation. This is true at all levels in the WID organizational structure--from first-line supervision to senior management.

Bosses who do not provide sufficient feedback typically have poor working relationships with their employees. As a result, the development and performance of their employees suffer. The following principles will help you give feedback in such a way that it will be accepted and used by employees:

- Minimize criticism

  Criticism can cause employees to become defensive, reducing their ability to objectively consider your feedback. Give negative feedback tactfully and sparingly.

- Provide feedback on results **and** behavior

  It is possible to attain desired results in an undesirable manner. For instance, an employee may accomplish a task but alienate co-workers or customers in the process. Teach your employees the right way to get things done.

- Give feedback whenever there are significant variations in an employee's performance

  Providing constructive, helpful feedback in a timely manner is a key element of coaching.

- Provide feedback in such a way that employees understand you

  It is your responsibility to ensure that employees understand your messages. Don't use hints. Hinting is an inefficient, unreliable, and non-assertive way of communicating.

More information on using feedback can be found in MAS-106, *Communications*.

Good Coaching Practice

- When coaching employees, listen more, talk less

  Employees are more likely to be satisfied with coaching sessions when they actively participate. Active participation by employees also increases the odds that performance improvement goals will be accepted and met.

Coaching Practice to Avoid

- Coaching employees only when there are serious performance problems

  Coaching should be used often to maximize employee performance. Think about basketball games you have watched. When a team is losing their competitive edge, the coach calls for a time-out. The coach of the winning team doesn't leave his or her players out on the court to watch the other team huddle. The winning coach also huddles with his or her team, providing feedback and sharing information necessary to maintain the lead and win the game. Coach your employees frequently - not just when problems arise.

D. MENTORING

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify characteristics of effective mentors.
2. Identify benefits of mentoring.
3. Identify ways to mentor employees.
4. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in mentoring.

Mentors are individuals who pass on the benefit of their knowledge and experience to younger and less experienced individuals. Mentoring is a valuable activity that:

- has a positive effect on the career progress of mentored employees
- can help to increase employees' self-esteem and satisfaction with their work
- can help employees to make a greater contribution to WID's success

Mentoring sounds great for employees who receive the mentoring. But do mentors benefit from the mentoring relationship? The answer is "yes;" mentors receive the following benefits:

- The mentor's advancement is facilitated

  Promoting you is much less disruptive for the division if a replacement is readily at hand. Preparing a replacement for yourself through mentoring can help you advance.

- Mentoring reflects favorably on the mentor's performance

  WID managers are appraised in terms of their effectiveness in developing employees. Mentoring is a very powerful method for developing employees.

- Mentors accumulate power, respect, and future access to information through their proteges

- Mentors spread their influence elsewhere, both inside and outside their organization

  Proteges may go elsewhere, but they retain the imprints of their mentors.

- Successful mentors are likely to gain esteem among their peers

Mentoring requires more than merely acting supportive or giving advice. Mentors provide proteges with sponsorship, exposure, coaching, counselling, protection, friendship, and challenging assignments. They use their greater knowledge, experience, and status to help their proteges. Mentors act as role models and as sources of acceptance and confirmation.

Characteristics of Effective Mentors

Effective mentors:

- are older, having about 8 to 15 years more experience than their proteges

  A greater age difference may result in a generation gap that interferes with mentoring. A smaller age difference can lead to a peer relationship, rather than a mentoring relationship.

- are sufficiently empathetic to the needs of proteges

- are highly placed, powerful, and knowledgeable

  Employees place a premium on feedback they receive from such persons.

- are successful, competent, and considerate

- are emotionally stable and tolerant of ambiguity

- value the organization

- like and respect their proteges

- are not threatened by their proteges' potential to equal or surpass them

So how does one go about mentoring employees? Here's how:

- Pick an employee to be your protege

  Mentoring requires a lot of time, so it is often difficult to mentor more than one employee at a time. Be selective when picking a protege; look for someone who is:

- bright
- intense
- hungry for knowledge
- successful

- Inform your protege about:
  - how the organization works (the unwritten rules)
  - the uses of power
  - the importance of integrity
  - the essential elements of effective job performance
- Set a good example

  Be a model that your protege can admire and seek to emulate.
- Provide clear feedback
- Share your "war stories"
- Help to advance your protege by informing senior managers about your protege's accomplishments
- Avoid being too critical
- Take time to understand your protege
- Listen effectively
- Provide your protege with new perspectives

E. CAREER COUNSELLING

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good career counselling practices.
2. Identify career counselling practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness concerning career counselling.

Trust is the cornerstone of effective career counselling. Employees will not share their deepest career aspirations with you unless they trust you. They must feel comfortable sharing this information with you. For instance, an employee's mid-term goal may to be to obtain a lateral move into another department. Or an employee may be considering a "second career," seeking a dramatic shift in occupation or lifestyle. Such information is unlikely to be shared if an employee feels that it will not be treated confidentially or will meet with a negative reaction.

It is better for you and your employees when you are aware of their aspirations and goals. Employees benefit because you can offer valuable insight and help them reach their goals. You benefit because employees will keep you apprised of their career plans. You won't be caught without warning when employees make career decisions. Furthermore, you will build lasting supportive relationships with employees whom you've counselled through the years. The support and assistance you provide to employees will come back to you in due time.

Career counselling should not be a once-a-year activity. Periodically discuss goals and aspirations with employees. Career discussions with employees are an excellent opportunity to apply the good listening techniques described in MAS-106, *Communications*.

During career counselling discussions, help employees analyze their needs and interests, clarify their goals, and make plans. Your role is to guide a productive discussion and enable employees to discover for themselves what to do.

Be sparing with advice and don't try to tell employees what to do with their careers. Employees must decide for themselves in which direction to take their careers. Your role is to listen, counsel, and provide support. Fulfilling this role will promote a strong, open working relationship with employees.

Career discussions shouldn't be reduced to a formula - each discussion will be unique. Nonetheless, career discussions should:

- Help employees make career plans and decisions that will lead to career satisfaction

  Psychologists have determined that career satisfaction occurs when employees' dominant psychological needs find outlets in their work roles. When these needs are not met on the job, employees feel restless, uneasy, and dissatisfied. Encourage employees to identify their needs and interests. Tests, workbooks, and career counselors can be helpful. Contact the Team Leader, Professional Development, for assistance.

- Identify appropriate possible future positions

  Use employees' needs and interests as a basis for identifying possible future positions for which employees can aim. Try to find positions that closely match what employees like to do.

- Identify areas for development

  "Areas for development" are knowledge, skills, or abilities required for a position but not possessed by an employee. Identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for positions in which employees are interested. Then identify knowledge, skills, and abilities employees need to enhance before they can qualify for the positions. It is best to let employees identify their areas for development. If they overlook areas that you feel need strengthening, diplomatically bring these to their attention. The following type of statement may work: "Maintaining one's composure during stressful situations is important to succeed in this job. How would you characterize your skill level in this area?"

- Identify pathways that will lead to career goals

  Help the employee identify ways to build competence in areas for development. Emphasize that this will help get them where they want to be.

It is important to follow up on your career discussions with employees. Periodically ask employees about the progress of their developmental efforts. Provide encouragement and assistance when needed. Inform employees about positions that you feel are a good match for them. This may open up career avenues that employees have not considered.

Managing Expectations

Some employees may have overly optimistic career plans. Optimism, in itself, is good. Being unrealistic, however, can lead to disappointment and disillusionment. Make sure your employees have realistic expectations about when they will be ready for promotional moves. Your assessment of how realistic career aspirations are, based on past performance and opportunities currently available within the division and Westinghouse, is a valuable asset to employees. When adjusting employee expectations, avoid saying something like, "I don't think that you'll want to make the sacrifices necessary to reach that level." Instead, describe the sacrifices matter-of-factly and let employees decide for themselves: "Reaching that level requires at least seven years of nuclear industry experience, strong knowledge of DOE orders, and lots of experience in dealing with auditors."

One of your employees may become interested in a job that you believe is way beyond his or her current capabilities. Or an employee may express an interest in a position for which he or she is not well-suited. Here's how these situations can be handled:

1. Ask yourself why you feel the position isn't right for the employee

   Is it because the employee isn't a good match for the position? Or is it because you don't want to lose a valuable employee? Make sure that you don't provide bad advice because you don't want to lose someone. Employees almost always see through this kind of manipulative communication.

2. Give the employee realistic information about the position

   Provide the employee with information about:

   - positive aspects of the position
   - negative aspects of the position
   - required knowledge, skills, and abilities
   - the type of people who tend to perform best in the position (an ideal incumbent profile)

Give the employee feedback on his or her readiness. Providing this type of valuable information will require some information gathering on your part. Don't try to wing it; your advice may influence the remainder of the employee's career. Thoroughly familiarize yourself with the position requirements before giving feedback. You can do this by reading a copy of the job posting and job description for the position. Or you can call the supervisor/manager to whom the position reports. Don't send the employee to talk with the supervisor/manager with the opening; you are the proper person to provide this type of information.

If an employee does not meet position requirements, point out the discrepancies. Using diplomacy and I-statements is recommended. Example: "I think you need to build your experience in these areas to qualify for this position." Communicate reasons for the requirements; help employees understand that persons who do not possess the requirements are unlikely to perform adequately in the position.

3. Determine whether the employee is still interested in the position

If the employee is still interested, join with the employee in a planning process. Offer to help the employee devise an appropriate development plan to qualify for the position. Identify the employee's areas for development. Ask the employee questions like, "This position requires dealing with conflict on a regular basis; how would you characterize your conflict management skills?" If you and the employee find that you have widely differing estimates of the employee's competence in a particular area, further discussion is in order. This is a signal that the employee probably hasn't received sufficient feedback.

If the employee is not still interested in the position, help the employee chart a new career course. Assist the employee in identifying a future position that might be a more logical objective. Again, you and the employee formulate a developmental action plan to prepare the employee for the position. Then follow up with the employee at appropriate intervals to gauge progress and provide redirection or encouragement.

F. PROGRESSION GROUPS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good progression group practices.
2. Identify progression group practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness concerning progression groups.

WID has established a series of progression groups, sometimes referred to as "job families." A "progression group" is a sequence of positions within a specific occupation. Progression groups are valuable components of WID's personnel development repertoire, making it possible for employees to advance within a given occupation.

Let's look at two WID progression groups. We will start with the non-exempt Maintenance progression group, which is comprised of the following four positions:

- Utility Technician
- Maintenance Technician
- Maintenance Specialist
- Senior Maintenance Specialist

Entry-level employees in Maintenance are classified as Utility Technicians. Persons in this position work under normal supervision for most job assignments with direction from their supervisor or higher classified maintenance personnel. Senior Maintenance Specialists, however, work with little or no direct supervision. They receive broad objectives from their supervisor and exercise a high degree of judgement, initiative, and interpretation. These individuals usually establish their own priorities and schedules. Not all individuals hired as Utility Technicians will progress to the top of the Maintenance progression group because the number of Senior Maintenance Specialist positions is limited.

Now let's look at an exempt progression group. The Engineering progression group consists of the following six positions:

- Assistant Engineer
- Associate Engineer
- Engineer
- Senior Engineer B
- Senior Engineer
- Principal Engineer

The range of knowledge possessed by employees within this progression group is apparent when we contrast the knowledge required to perform the major responsibilities for the lowest position (Assistant Engineer) with that required for the highest position (Principal Engineer):

- Assistant Engineer - limited knowledge of fundamental engineering principals, theories, and concepts
- Principal Engineer - extensive knowledge of engineering principles, methods, and techniques, related project operating procedures and DOE orders, administrative and planning systems, and basic management techniques.

As you can see, the amount of knowledge required of incumbents in the two positions varies greatly. Principal Engineers require less direct supervision and make more independent decisions than Assistant Engineers.

Some progression groups tend to feed employees into other progression groups. For instance, many of the employees in the Administration progression group (exempt) are drawn from the Secretarial progression group (non-exempt).

It is important to understand that employees are not locked into their current progression groups. Employees can and do move between progression groups, and these moves are usually lateral (nonpromotional).

It is also important to remember that employees remaining in a particular progression group may eventually "top out," reaching the highest position. To obtain a promotion or a higher graded position, such employees would have to enter another progression. New jobs are not created in a progression merely to reward employees who have topped out. Remember, WID's compensation structure is partially based on what the labor market pays for similar jobs, and there is an upward limit to the compensation employees in a particular progression can receive.

If you have an opportunity to affect the job structure in your department, keep the concept of career paths in mind. Whenever you can, avoid setting up a structure of dead-end positions. Human Resources can help you set up a structure that will allow employees to progress as they continue to amass knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Progression Group Practice to Avoid

- Promoting employees merely because they have reached the top position in their career paths

  Career paths do have terminal positions, and employees do reach plateaus. Don't attempt to promote employees merely because they have advanced as far as they can in their career path. This will undermine WID's occupational progression system.

G. MAKING PROMOTION DECISIONS

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good practices to follow when making promotion decisions.
2. Identify practices to avoid when making promotion decisions.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness in making promotion decisions.

Consider two employees. One employee is doing a great job in an undemanding position. Another employee is performing acceptably but not outstandingly in a tough position. Which employee do you promote? The employee who is doing a great job may not be suited to a role as a supervisor or manager. The employee who is performing acceptably in the tough position may bloom after being promoted into another position. As you can see, promotion decisions can be difficult.

Decisions about who to promote into open positions are among the most important decisions made by managers. Despite their importance, these decisions are often made with poor results. According to Peter Drucker, who has studied how managers match jobs with people:

> ...by and large, executives make poor promotion and staffing decisions. By all accounts, their batting average in no better than .333: at most one-third of such decisions turn out right; one-third are minimally effective; and one-third are out-right failures.

At WID, we can do better than .333 if we learn and carefully and consistently apply the decision processes that lead to good promotion decisions.

Non-Exempt Promotions

The most senior, qualified employee within a progression group is given first consideration for promotional openings. If no employees within the progression group are qualified, the job is posted. Regular employees from outside the progression are then considered for transfer to the open position.

Employees are considered "qualified" when they 1) meet specific position requirements as defined in the position description and the essential functions analysis and 2) demonstrate satisfactory work and attendance records in their present position.

To be eligible for promotion or transfer, an employee must be on the active roll and have occupied their current position for a minimum of six months. Employees in progressive discipline, documented and approved by Human Resources, are ineligible for promotion or transfer until they are removed from disciplinary probation.

Non-exempt employees are considered for promotion in accordance with the following:

1. First consideration is given to promoting the most senior, qualified eligible employee from any progression group who satisfactorily held the open position but was displaced from that position due to a reduction in force within the last 12 months.

2. If the position is not filled by Step 1, next consideration is given to promote the most senior, qualified eligible employee in the next lower grade and successively lower grades in the same progression group.

3. If the position cannot be filled by application of Steps 1 or 2, the position will be identified as an "open position." This open position will be filled by the process described in Section H of this module, "The Job Posting System."

Promotion From Non-exempt to Exempt Status

Promoting employees from non-exempt to exempt status requires meeting requirements administered by WID's Human Resources Department. Meeting these requirements is important because WID is audited to ascertain whether the division is adhering to these requirements.

Before attempting to promote someone to exempt status:

- Verify that you have a justifiable need for an exempt position

- Check with Human Resources to verify that the requirements for exempt status have been met

- Do not speak with the employee about the possible change in their status until **all** required approvals have been obtained

Once a non-exempt employee has been promoted to exempt status, do not expect them to perform all of their previous duties in addition to their new duties. As a general rule, employees classified as exempt must spend at least 80 percent of their time doing exempt work.

Further information about exempt vs. non-exempt positions can be found in MAS-110, *Employee Relations*.

Exempt Promotions

The rules are different for promoting exempt employees. The most senior, qualified rule does not apply. Open non-management exempt jobs are posted. This supports WID's commitment to promote from within whenever practical. Promoting from within is not always possible, and some exempt positions are filled from outside the division.

The Peter Principle

Must every employee strive to move up through the organization? Or can we allow employees to reach career plateaus where they can perform very well without being promoted one further level, where they may not perform ably? These questions deserve consideration because, in our society, persons who don't want to move up or be promoted may be considered odd or lazy.

Joseph Raelin, who has studied the differences between managers and professionals, notes that "...many professionals prefer not to see their contribution undermined by organizational pressure to embark on a managerial career ladder." Employees who do not want to be promoted may feel that failing to show interest in advancement is a black mark against their record. This misperception could cause some employees to accept promotions into positions for which they are not suited, putting the Peter Principle into effect. The Peter Principle was formulated by Laurence J. Peter who observed that employees tend to rise to their level of incompetence in hierarchical organizations. When this happens, it is detrimental to the employees and costly to the organizations.

Take promotion decisions seriously. Such decisions have a big impact on WID. When you promote someone, you are not only rewarding them, you are also placing them at risk. There is nothing more cruel than promoting someone to a level at which they have no chance for success.

Exercise extreme care when filling supervisory and management positions. You and all of the employees reporting to the promoted person will suffer if you make a poor choice.

Employees watch who gets promoted and form opinions about what behaviors caused the employees to be promoted. Those who want to be promoted will emulate those who receive promotions. If promotions go to nonperformers, flatterers, or gamesmen, our organization will soon decline to nonperformance, flattery, and gamesmanship.

Good Practices in Making Promotion Decisions

- Recognize the importance of making good promotion decisions

  Of all the decisions you make, promotion decisions are among the most important. Promotion decisions affect people's lives.

- Ensure that persons promoted within your section/department understand your expectations

  It is your responsibility to ensure that employees you promote understand their new jobs. Don't assume that they will figure out what is expected. As Drucker says: "It is not intuitively obvious to most people that a new and different job requires new and different behavior."

  Make it clear to newly promoted employees that their new positions will require different behavior, a different focus, and different working relationships. Drucker advises managers to tell newly promoted persons that "...the things you did to get the promotion are almost certainly the wrong things to do now." In some cases this may be a slight overstatement. Nonetheless, it is imperative to guide newly-promoted employees in the right direction by clearly conveying one's expectations. If this guidance is not provided, the blame for poor performance cannot be placed on a newly promoted employee. The employee's immediate manager is at fault. That manager has failed to meet an important responsibility.

- If you make a poor promotion decision, own up to it

  If you promote someone and that person does not perform well, you need to act. You have no business complaining about the person or blaming anyone. Take prompt and effective action to improve the situation.

Practices to Avoid in Making Promotion Decisions

- Assuming that an employee with good technical skills will also be good at managing

  Don't promote solely on the basis of technical expertise. You'll be disappointed if you assume that technical superiority will conquer all. The higher a person rises in WID's organization structure, the more general (and less technical) their job typically becomes. Performing well in a technical position and performing well as a manager require different sets of skills.

- Failing to correct promotion mistakes

  If a decision to promote someone turns out to be a mistake, fix it. Allowing job/person mismatches to perpetuate hurts the division and the person. Consult with Human Resources to chart out a proper course of action.

  When employees have been promoted one level too high or outgrown by their jobs, it may be possible to offer the option of returning to their previous or equivalent positions. This will permit a return to a level where they were previously successful. For instance, a manager who is a good technician but a poor manager may welcome a chance to return to what he or she does best.

  In other cases, employees may be able to move laterally to other positions which are better suited to their abilities. A "fast-tracker" who has been promoted too rapidly may welcome an assignment to a less demanding job which offers career stability.

  If properly rehabilitated, employees who have been demoted or reassigned can serve as mentors to less experienced employees. Consider such options for yourself and your employees when appropriate.

- Letting someone's potential cloud your judgement

  Potential is not the same as readiness. A person may have great long-term potential, but potential is merely something that can develop or become actual in the future. Keep an employee's readiness for promotion in proper perspective. You may have a smart employee with a good degree who has performed very well as an individual contributor. But is this person ready for a management position? Maybe not.

- Letting someone's experience cloud your judgement

  Experience alone won't produce readiness for promotion. A person may have "sat in the right chairs," but this doesn't automatically equate to promotability. The amount different persons learn from the same experience can vary greatly. Temperament, ability to learn and alter behavior, and what an employee enjoys doing also affect how well he or she will do in a job.

- Promoting an employee as a reward for longevity

  For exempt positions, seniority is not a factor in promotion decisions. Don't promote an employee merely because he or she has been around a long time.

- Promoting someone who is not performing at least "very good" in their present position

  Promotions are part of WID's organizational reward system. Is it right to reward an employee with a promotion when that employee is not doing well in his or her current position? The answer is a resounding "NO."

- Assuming that exemplary performance in one position will continue in a higher-level position

  Different abilities are necessary for success at the various levels within WID. Success in an entry-level position reveals little of a predictive nature regarding success as a first-line supervisor because the job requirements of the two positions are so radically different. And success as a first-line supervisor may reveal little about success as a third- or fourth-level manager.

  Not all employees who perform outstandingly are suited to be team leaders. And not all outstanding team leaders will make good supervisors. Past performance is an indicator of future performance. But assuming that an employee will continue to perform at a high level of performance simply because they are doing so in their present job is risky.

- Promoting because you want to be a "good guy"

  You aren't really being a good guy when you promote someone who isn't ready. The person you improperly promote and their coworkers will soon realize that you made a mistake.

- Attempting to promote employees haphazardly or reactively

  Plan promotions - don't react solely to recent events. Human Resources personnel can assist you in assessing employee promotability. If you request deviations from promotion plans, the deviations will need to be adequately justified.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A manager spoke with an employee, saying "I want to promote you next year. Call Human Resources and find out what kind of paperwork I need to do that." The employee did just that.

Impact: Human Resources personnel immediately knew a problem had been created; the employee was expecting to be promoted. If this did not take place, the employee was sure to be disappointed and resentful.

Lessons learned: 1) Properly manage employee expectations. Never create an expectation that you may not be able to fulfill. 2) Don't overcommunicate. Employees need to know that you value their contribution and that you have plans for their development. They do **not** need to know about unapproved plans to promote them.

H. THE JOB POSTING SYSTEM

Enabling Objectives

Upon completion of this section, the trainee will be able to perform the following:

1. Identify good job posting practices.
2. Identify job posting practices to avoid.
3. Given a scenario, evaluate the manager's effectiveness concerning job posting.

"Job posting" takes place when an announcement describing an open (vacant) position is posted on bulletin boards. Employees can then apply and be considered for open positions which interest them.

The job posting system makes it possible for employees to change jobs, gain new skills, and broaden their experience base. Thus, the job posting system is an important means of developing personnel at WID.

Job posting can help managers fill open positions by providing a larger pool of applicants than would be possible if jobs were not posted. But not all jobs that become vacant are posted. In this section, we will discuss the mechanics of WID's job posting system.

Non-Exempt Positions

When a non-exempt position becomes vacant, WID follows the process described in Section G of this module, "Making Promotion Decisions." Once the requirements for posting have been met, Employee Relations posts the open position for 72 working hours. Employees interested in the position fill out posting applications (WP Form 1492). To be considered, posting applications must be received by Employee Relations no later than 3:00 p.m. on the expiration date indicated on the posting.

Employees are strongly encouraged to obtain the signature of their immediate supervisor/manager on posting applications. This is not an absolute requirement, but it is a courtesy that apprises the immediate supervisor/manager that the employee is interested in another position. Supervisors and managers may not prevent eligible employees from bidding on posted positions.

Employee Relations presents all eligible applicants in seniority order to the hiring manager within three working days of the expiration of the posting. Employee Relations will 1) advise the employee's immediate supervisor/manager of the applicant's status, and 2) advise all applicants for the position of their ranking relative to the most senior, qualified eligible applicant.

The hiring manager reviews the applicants' paperwork and evaluates the applicants in terms of their qualifications. Once the hiring manager has decided who is and who is not qualified, he or she discusses this decision with Employee Relations. This takes place **before** the hiring manager speaks with any of the applicants.

The hiring manager must interview the most senior, qualified, eligible employee and inform Employee Relations of his or her placement decision within five working days. Hiring managers requiring more than five working days should contact Employee Relations to obtain an extension.

If the hiring manager finds the most senior, qualified eligible applicant to be acceptable, Employee Relations generates an appropriate offer within three working days of the decision. If a decision is made that the applicant is not acceptable and Employee Relations agrees with this decision, the applicant will be informed immediately by the hiring manager. The process will then continue until an acceptable applicant is selected.

Upon receipt of the offer, the applicant must respond within two working days. If the offer is accepted, the other applicants must be informed that the position has been filled. This must take place within two working days of the acceptance. If the offer is rejected, the above process continues until the position is filled by the next most senior, qualified eligible employee.

The physical transfer date of an employee who has been selected for a new position must be determined by the affected managers but shall not exceed 30 days from the date of acceptance. Any change in compensation and position date becomes effective on the first of the month following the acceptance.

Exempt Positions

The job posting system operates a bit differently for exempt positions. Open non-management exempt positions are posted on designated bulletin boards. It is WID policy to promote from within the division and Westinghouse whenever practicable. But it is not always possible to fill exempt positions from within the WID employee ranks. It is sometimes in WID's best interest to fill open positions from outside the division.

Several things need to be addressed before leaving the topic of job posting. When a position reporting to you is posted, you can expect to receive the paperwork on all applicants. This may include applicants who may not appear to be qualified for your open position. Employee Relations personnel do not screen or "weed out" less qualified applicants. Why not? Because you, the hiring manager, are the person who should decide who is and is not qualified for your opening. Besides, looking at the paperwork on all applicants allows you to familiarize yourself with employees in other departments. This can help you identify candidates who could satisfy your staffing needs in the future.

Employee Relations personnel will provide you with an applicant's attendance record and performance appraisal information upon request. This information should be a factor in your hiring decision.

Not everyone who is interested in a posted position will receive an interview. The hiring manager is responsible for notifying applicants that they will not be interviewed. Employees should be told what criteria they do not meet (i.e., performance, attendance, minimum job requirements). Many supervisors and managers dread this task. But this is valuable information because it helps employees understand how they can qualify for the position in the future. Employees who are seriously interested in the position will begin upgrading their qualifications and/or performance once they understand what criteria they do not meet. Thus, it important not to be vague or to "beat around the bush." Be clear and honest. A little consideration for the employee's feelings is also helpful.

You may remember that we warned against "passing the buck" in MAS-104, *Responsibility and Authority*. This important warning must be reiterated here. Do not pass the buck when speaking with employees who will not be interviewed for or hired into a posted position. An example of passing the buck is calling an employee and saying, "Human Resources says your attendance is bad, so I can't hire you." A better statement would be: "Your absentee rate is five percent, which I feel is unacceptable."

Some employees have the mistaken impression that, any time an employee moves to another position, a pay or job code increase is justified. This is not the case for lateral or downward moves. Help employees understand that WID's compensation structure is based on the market value of jobs. The division conducts surveys to ensure that jobs are properly classified and that employees in those jobs are paid fairly (for more information, see MAS-112, *Administrative Requirements*). Employees should understand that moves into other positions usually do not result in a higher salary or a higher job grade. The job grade for the new position, the amount of elapsed time since the employee's last pay increase, and other factors must be considered before a pay increase is granted.

Good Job Posting Practices

- Define duties, responsibilities, and required education and experience thoroughly and exactly

  It is crucial that you devote sufficient time, care, and thought to accurately define job requirements before open positions are posted.

- Make sure that applicants who respond to open positions meet minimum job requirements before you talk with them

  Minimum job requirements are defined in job descriptions and essential functions analyses. If you are not sure whether an employee meets a requirement, consult with Employee Relations personnel. They can help you make this determination.

Job Posting Practices to Avoid

- Posting positions without first talking with your employees

  Don't make your employees hear about openings in your section/department from people who work elsewhere in the division. This causes employees to feel that they have been left "in the dark." It also causes employees to judge you to be an undependable information source. Keep your employees informed about openings in your section/department - they can help you identify candidates.

- Attempting to hire employees who do not meet job requirements

  This sometimes happens when an excellent employee who does not fully meet a position description responds to a job posting. The supervisor or manager with the opening then becomes interested in hiring an employee who does not meet the minimum requirements. Employees who observe this type of modification usually assume that favoritism is the cause.

- Inappropriately "dangling a carrot" in front of employees

  Be careful when discussing an open or soon-to-be-open position with employees. A manager may say something like, "I'm wondering if you'd be interested in a position that's about to open up in my section." Employees often will interpret such statements as "He's going to select me for a position in his section." You can avoid these types of misunderstandings by following the good practices described in this module and in MAS-112, *Administrative Requirements*.

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: A manager needed to fill a non-exempt position. The position was posted, and an employee with an excellent performance record responded to the posting. Unfortunately, this employee did not meet the qualifications listed in the posting. Nevertheless, the manager interviewed the employee and told the employee that she would be awarded the position. Relying on the manager's statements, the employee told her family that she was soon to be promoted. Human Resources personnel became aware that a problem had been created when the employee's spouse called with compensation-related questions pertaining to the expected promotion. Since the employee did not meet the minimum requirements listed on the posting, the promotion could not be granted.

Impacts: 1) The employee had a hard time understanding why she had been promised and then denied a job. 2) The employee and her family were disappointed by the negative turn of events. 3) The employee's respect for the WID management team was diminished.

Lessons learned: 1) It is important to carefully define and then stick with requirements for open positions. Employees who do not meet these requirements should not be interviewed. 2) It is important to work closely with Employee Relations personnel when you are seeking to fill an open position. 3) Don't even hint that someone will be moved into an open position until you are absolutely certain that all required approvals have been obtained (your boss, Human Resources, etc.)

CRITICAL INCIDENT
INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR

Occurrence: An open position in a manager's department was posted. Applicants applied for the position, but the manager was slow about deciding who to interview. Approximately seven weeks passed before the manager called the applicants he had decided not to interview.

Impact: Applicants were frustrated by the waiting period. This frustration was revealed in statements such as: "I don't mind if he doesn't want to hire me, but I would appreciate it if he would let me know" and "I'm not sure I would like to work for him if this is the way he treats employees."

Lessons learned: 1) Decisions about who to interview and hire should be made promptly. 2) Applicants are typically anxious about their status when they respond to job postings. They often become fretful when they don't hear from the hiring manager. 3) Applicants make attributions about the desirability of working for a manager during the job posting/interviewing process. Requisitioning managers are also being evaluated (by the applicants). 4) Treating applicants with consideration is important.

I. SMART MOVES--WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Ask employees what they learned in training courses and how they can apply it on the job (*page 16*).
- Recognize and reward employees who apply newly learned behaviors and ideas (*pages 7 and 16*).
- Develop your employees by giving them challenging assignments (*page 8*).
- Use rotational job assignments to build expertise and depth of talent in your section/department (*page 8*).
- Inform employees about the wealth of developmental opportunities at WID, i.e., classroom training, self-study courses, the Educational Assistance Program, etc. (*pages 9, 10, and 11*).
- Talk with your employees and review their career interest forms to stay in touch with their career aspirations (*pages 14, 16, and 26*).
- Provide employees with helpful, consistent, specific feedback about their job performance frequently (*pages 15, 21, and 22*).
- Choose and mentor a protege (*pages 23-25*).
- Encourage employees to define their needs and interests and make career decisions that will lead to satisfaction (*page 27*).
- Manage employee expectations to prevent disappointment and disillusionment (*pages 28 and 29*).
- Make promotion decisions with extreme care (*pages 33-39*).
- Define knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for open positions thoroughly and accurately (*page 43*).

J. MODULE REFERENCES

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K. PRACTICE TEST

1. A manager explained to his employees that "Employee development is the process whereby the division takes responsibility for expanding employees' work-related knowledge, skills, and abilities." Was the manager's statement accurate? Why?

   a. YES - once employees identify and communicate their career aspirations, the division is then responsible for fulfilling the aspirations

   b. YES - most of the critical variables that cause employees to develop and advance within an organization are controlled by management

   c. NO - employee development is handled by Westinghouse's corporate offices in Pittsburgh--not by individual divisions such as WID

   d. NO - employee development is the process whereby employees take responsibility for expanding their work-related knowledge, skills, and abilities

   (B.3)

2. A manager was counselling a supervisor about personnel development. The manager said, "It is your coaching and attention - not formal training and educational courses - that will be most helpful in developing your employees." Was the manager's statement accurate? Why?

   a. YES - formal training and educational courses don't work once employees begin working full-time because they inevitably fall back into the same old ruts following the completion of such courses

   b. YES - employees typically derive more developmental benefit from coaching and attention provided by bosses and mentors than they do from formal training and educational courses

   c. NO - formal training and educational courses are the cornerstone of employee development

   d. NO - coaching and attention should only be provided by an employee's designated mentor

   (B.3)

3. A high-potential employee expressed interest in becoming a manager. The employee asked if she could be added to the waiting list for the next assessment center. The manager said this would not be possible because assessment slots are reserved for persons who are candidates for open supervisory or management positions. Was the manager's answer accurate? Why?

   a. YES - employees are not eligible for assessment until they are under consideration for a supervisory or management position that WID is actively seeking to fill

   b. YES - Westinghouse policy limits the number of participants that WID can send through the assessment process each year

   c. NO - all exempt employees with a "very good" rating or higher should complete the assessment process

   d. NO - employees who are likely to be considered for a supervisory/managerial role within the next 12 months can be assessed

   (B.3)

4. A manager was completing a performance appraisal form. To help motivate the employee to continue his outstanding performance, the manager included the following statement on the appraisal form: "Plans for promoting this employee during the next 12 months are being formulated." Was this a good practice? Why?

   a. YES - this is an appropriate statement which should be included on performance appraisal and PMS forms of high-potential employees

   b. YES - this statement is an appropriate and highly effective means of sustaining employee motivation and performance

   c. NO - the employee is likely to feel wronged if, for some reason, the promotion does not materialize

   d. NO - plans of this type should not be put in writing; instead such plans should be discussed verbally with employees during performance appraisal sessions

   (B.3)

5. A senior manager who had been recently promoted to a new position was performing below his boss' expectations. The boss began to meet with the senior manager more frequently to clarify what was expected and provide coaching and feedback. Was this a good approach? Why?

   a. YES - persons at all levels in the WID organizational structure benefit from coaching and feedback

   b. NO - persons who make it to the senior management level should know what is expected of them; feedback and coaching are uncalled for at this level

   c. NO - the boss was wasting time that should have been spent looking for a replacement for the senior manager

   (C.3)

6. A manager was talking with a supervisor about mentoring. The manager said, "Effective mentors are usually no less than two and no more than five years older than their proteges." Was the manager's statement accurate? Why?

   a. YES - more than a five year age difference will result in a generation gap that interferes with mentoring

   b. YES - more than a five year age difference leads to a peer relationship rather than a mentoring relationship

   c. YES - mentors with a great deal more power and knowledge than their proteges are less able to coach and counsel effectively

   d. NO - effective mentors usually have a minimum of 20 years more experience than their proteges

   e. NO - effective mentors usually have 8 to 15 years more experience than their proteges

   (D.3)

7. A manager stated that, "When counselling employees concerning their careers, my role is to provide advice and tell them which jobs they should pursue next." Was the manager's statement accurate? Why?

   a. YES - the manager's role is to persuade employees to seek positions where they will make the greatest contribution to Westinghouse

   b. YES - managers should decide in which direction employees should take their careers

   c. YES - providing advice and telling employees what to do with their careers is a good way to promote a strong, open working relationship

   d. NO - career counselling should be handled solely by the trained professionals within the Human Resources Department

   e. NO - managers should be sparing with advice and allow employees to make career decisions for themselves

   (E.3)

8. Employees occasionally expressed interest in a manager's position. When this happened, the manager gave them a realistic view, including information about the position's negative aspects. Was this a good practice? Why?

   a. YES - employees should be discouraged whenever they express interest in management positions

   b. YES - employees should be provided with realistic information about both the positive and negative aspects of positions

   c. NO - providing information about the negative aspects of positions will have a harmful effect on the organization because persons who are a good fit for the positions will no longer be interested

   d. NO - interested employees should only be provided with information about the positive aspects of positions

   (E.3)

9. When a manager's employees expressed interest in positions in other departments, the manager sent the employees to talk with the managers to whom the positions reported. Was this a good practice? Why?

   a. YES - this is practicing the Westinghouse open door policy as required

   b. NO - the manager should have sent the employees to HRD&TQ to obtain information about their readiness for the positions

   c. NO - the manager should have gathered information about the requirements for the positions and provided the employees with feedback about their readiness

   (E.3)

10. While discussing WID's progression groups, a manager stated, "...once employees enter a particular progression group they are locked into that group until they reach the highest position in the group." Was the manager's statement accurate? Why?

   a. YES - WID enforces this rule to prevent personnel from moving back and forth between progression groups

   b. YES - employees are locked into their progression groups unless promoted into another progression group

   c. NO - employees are not locked into progression groups - they can and do move between progression groups

   d. NO - once employees enter a particular progression group they are locked into that group until they have been in the group for a minimum of one year

   (F.3)

L. ANSWERS AND FEEDBACK FOR PRACTICE TEST

1. d. NO - employee development is the process whereby employees take responsibility for expanding their work-related knowledge, skills, and abilities

2. b. YES - employees typically derive more developmental benefit from coaching and attention provided by bosses and mentors than they do from formal training and educational courses

3. d. NO - employees who are likely to be considered for a supervisory/managerial role within the next 12 months can be assessed

4. c. NO - the employee is likely to feel wronged if, for some reason, the promotion does not materialize

5. a. YES - persons at all levels in the WID organizational structure benefit from coaching and feedback

6. e. NO - effective mentors usually have 8 to 15 years more experience than their proteges

7. e. NO - managers should be sparing with advice and allow employees to make career decisions for themselves

8. b. YES - employees should be provided with realistic information about both the positive and negative aspects of positions

9. c. NO - the manager should have gathered information about the requirements for the positions and provided the employees with feedback about their readiness

10. c. NO - employees are not locked into progression groups - they can and do move between progression groups

If you scored 80 percent or higher on the practice test, you are ready to take the module examination; please proceed to Human Resources Development and Total Quality.

If you scored less than 80 percent on the practice test, please re-read the module and take the practice test again. If you still have questions, contact the Team Leader, Professional Development, or the Manager, Human Resources Development and Total Quality.